

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 139444
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SUBJECT: ZAIRE IN U.S. PRESS

1. JUNE 1 EDITION OF NEW YORK TIMES CARRIES NEWS ANALYSIS
ON PAGE 3 BY FLORA LEWIS ENTITLED "PARLEY ON ZAIRE: DEAL-
ING WITH SHIFTS IN AFRICA'S TIES WITH THE WEST"

2. EXCERPTS FOLLOW:

QUOTE: THE HASTILY ARRANGED WESTERN MEETING HERE NEXT
MONDAY TO CONSIDER ZAIRE'S FRAGILE CONDITION REFLECTS TWO
IMPORTANT CONCLUSIONS ON WHICH THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE
HAVE AGREED AFTER MUCH HESITATION. ONE IS THAT THE MAJOR
WESTERN COUNTRIES CANNOT IGNORE MILITARY AND POLITICAL
INSTABILITY IN AFRICA, AND THAT THE SOVIET UNION CAN ONLY
BENEFIT FROM DETERIORATING SITUATIONS THERE, WHETHER OR
NOT IT ACTIVELY HELPS TO PROVOKE TROUBLE IN SENSITIVE
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PAGE 02 STATE 139444

AREAS.

THE OTHER IS THAT NO SINGLE WESTERN COUNTRY CAN CONTINUE
TO INTERVENE IN SUCH SITUATIONS, EVEN AS AN EMERGENCY MEA-
SURE, AND SHOULD INSTEAD SUPPORT MUTUAL SELF-DEFENSE MEA-
SURES BY MODERATE AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS.

DISAGREEMENT ON APPROACH: THE SUDDEN DECISION TO CONVENE THE PARLEY WAS REACHED AT A DINNER MEETING OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRESIDENT VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING OF FRANCE IN WASHINGTON LAST FRIDAY, WITH DETAILS OF THE MEETING TO BE WORKED OUT. THE UNITED STATES, BRITAIN, WEST GERMANY, BELGIUM AND FRANCE ARE SCHEDULED TO PARTICIPATE, BUT MORE MAY JOIN. HIGH-RANKING FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS ARE EXPECTED, BUT HAVE NOT YET BEEN NAMED, AND SOME DISAGREEMENT REMAINS ON HOW THE ISSUE IS TO BE APPROACHED.

THE UNITED STATES IS STRESSING THAT MONDAY'S SESSION WILL LEAD UP TO THE LONG-SCHEDULED BRUSSELS MEETING ON JUNE 13 AND 14 TO TRY TO RESCUE ZAIRE'S BANKRUPT ECONOMY. THE REBEL ATTACKS ON SHABA PROVINCE THREATENED TO SHUT DOWN THE COUNTRY'S ENTIRE EARNING CAPACITY, WHICH IS BASED ON RICH MINERAL RESOURCES IN THE SOUTHERN REGION.

ALL THOSE WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE SESSION, HOWEVER, FEEL THAT ECONOMIC AID CANNOT RESTORE THE COUNTRY'S HEALTH IF ITS SECURITY IS SO WEAK THAT EXPORTS CAN BE HALTED. NOR IS THERE ANY DISPUTE OVER THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF EUROPEAN TECHNICIANS THERE IN KEEPING THE MINERALS MOVING OUT. INDEED, IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE REBEL ATTACK WAS TO BRING ABOUT THE COUNTRY'S COLLAPSE BY FRIGHTENING OFF THE TECHNICIANS.

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PAGE 03 STATE 139444

BELGIUM IS RELUCTANT TO HAVE THE PARIS MEETING APPEAR TO BE A KIND OF INNER-CIRCLE CABAL TO PREPARE FOR THE BRUSSELS FINANCIAL TALKS. AT THAT MEETING, SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN, THE NETHERLANDS AND POSSIBLY CANADA AND JAPAN WILL JOIN THE OTHER NATIONS, ALONG WITH ZAIRE'S FOREIGN MINISTER, JEAN UMBADI LUTETE, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND, TO DISCUSS THE "MOBUTU PLAN" FOR ECONOMIC RESCUE, NAMED FOR ZAIRE'S PRESIDENT, MOBUTU SESE SEKO.

ZAIRE'S CENTRAL BANK HAS BEEN UNABLE TO MAKE ANY PAYMENTS FOR A YEAR AND A HALF. TO PUT THAT INSTITUTION BACK ON ITS FEET WILL REQUIRE DEBT RESCHEDULING AND SUBSTANTIAL AID, AND SOME CREDITORS STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT NO ECONOMIC TURN-AROUND WILL BE POSSIBLE UNTIL COMPETENT, RELIABLE OUTSIDE ADVISERS TAKE OVER AND IMPOSE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER.

LITTLE SYMPATHY IS EXPENDED IN BRUSSELS ON GENERAL MOBUTU. HIS MISMANAGEMENT OF ZAIRE IS CONSIDERED AN IMPORTANT REASON FOR HIS TROUBLES. THAT BELIEF IS PART OF THE REASON BELGIUM WAS RELUCTANT TO DO MORE THAN RESCUE WHITES IN

KOLWEZI, THE SHABA COPPER-MINING CENTER, RATHER THAN JOIN THE FRENCH OPERATION, WHICH WAS ALSO AIMED AT "RESTORING STABILITY."

BUT IT IS ALSO CONCEDED THAT THERE IS NO REPLACEMENT IN SIGHT FOR THE ZAIRIAN LEADER, AND THAT HIS FALL WOULD LEAD TO A DANGEROUS SITUATION THAT COULD SPREAD MUCH FURTHER THAN ZAIRE'S BORDERS, RATHER THAN TO ANY POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT.

SECURITY ISSUE SEEN AS CRITICAL: THUS, THE BELGIANS WOULD LIKE THE PARIS TALKS TO CONCENTRATE ON THE SECURITY ISSUE, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN INTER-AFRICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 STATE 139444

FORCE TO PUT DOWN ANY MILITARY THREATS. THE FRENCH ARE ALSO ENTHUSIASTIC OVER THE IDEA OF SUCH A FORCE, AND WOULD LIKE TO OBTAIN THE BACKING OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE MAJOR EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS FOR IT.

THE HOPE AT THIS POINT IS THAT THE AFRICAN STATES WILL PROVIDE THE MANPOWER, WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES OFFERING LOGISTIC SUPPORT, WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE TRAINING, ADVISERS AND PERHAPS PART OF THE FINANCING. IT IS ALSO HOPED THAT OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES, PRINCIPALLY SAUDI ARABIA, WILL HELP UNDERWRITE THE PROJECT. UNQUOTE.

3. MISINFORMATION CONCERNING BANK OF ZAIRE CORRECT IN 1 JUNE PRESS GUIDANCE AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE:

Q: IS IT CORRECT THAT THE ZAIRIAN CENTRAL BANK HAS NOT MADE ANY PAYMENTS DURING THE PAST YEAR?

A: NO, THAT IS NOT CORRECT, DURING THE PAST YEAR THE ZAIRIAN CENTRAL BANK HAS CONTINUED TO PROVIDE FOREIGN EXCHANGE AND MEET MANY OF ITS EXTERNAL OBLIGATIONS. IT IS TRUE, HOWEVER, THAT THE ECONOMIC CRUNCH BROUGHT ON BY LOW COPPER PRICES EVEN PRIOR TO THIS SECOND INCURSION HAS SEVERELY RESTRICTED THE AMOUNT OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE AVAILABLE. THUS, PAYMENT IS NOT ALWAYS TIMELY. ZAIRE AND THE IMF HAVE BEEN WORKING ON SOLUTIONS TO THIS PROBLEM WHICH WILL BE ADDRESSED IN DEPTH BY THE MOBUTU PLAN. UNQUOTE.

4. DECLASSY UPON RECEIPT. VANCE

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